

Conservation Commission Minutes
May 4, 2016

Present: Jim Tasse, Zach Matzkin, Garvan Donegan, Mark Fleming, Jeremy Gabrielson, Marti Blair, Planner Maureen O'Meara

Absent: Mitch Wacksman

Guests: Cindy Krum; Suzanne McGinn, Sheila Wellehan, David Wing, Cara McCormack

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. Citizen comments on items not on the agenda. None.
2. The minutes of April 12, 2016 should reflect that not all the short bridge spans at Great Pond are suitable for horses. A civil engineer has reviewed the bridges and found only one that is suitable for use by horses. The minutes were approved unanimously.
3. Town Council goal-missing link in Crosstown Trail. The primary one is going out to Route 77 from the Methodist Church. Cindy Krum stated that the Land Trust has had discussions with the Methodist Church and has learned that they don't mind people using the trail, but don't want it formalized. The Land Trust will reach out again to the church.

There was discussion of the end point of the Crosstown Trail at Kettle Cove Road.

Missing links to neighborhoods on the Greenbelt Trail will be discussed at the next meeting.

4. Meeting to review dogs on Greenbelt trails. The Planner made a suggestion that we add a provision that if there is evidence that a particular dog owner has been behaving badly on the trails, that their ability to walk their dog off leash be limited or revoked.

Sheila Wellehan stated that there is more than one constituency of interested parties in this issue.

David Wing stated that as the person who grooms the cross country ski trails in Gull Crest, he would like to be able to ask dog walkers to not walk on the groomed trail.

On June 14, the Conservation Commission will hold a meeting to understand citizen concerns, starting at 6:00 p.m.

5. Greenbelt expansion acquisition recommendation – Loveitt Woods access. There is currently an existing casual trail leading to Glenden Road. The property owned by Karen Willens is available for \$75,000. The current trail is in an underserved neighborhood, is dry, and is well used by the neighborhood. As part of sale, a conservation easement would be put on the property which would preserve the current condition. This is on the Council agenda for Monday night.

David Wing stated that one of the reasons this is such a nice trail is that it is one of Dr. Olmstead's trails, which are all very well laid out. Mr. Wing is in favor of the acquisition, it is a great opportunity for the neighborhood.

Sheila Wellehan spoke in favor of the acquisition.

Cara McCormick shared her love of the trail. It is her neighbors who use the trail.

Motion: To strongly recommend to the Council the Willen property

Passed unanimously

6. Greenbelt expansion acquisition – Glew property. Cindy Krum described the property which is near Great Pond, and contains a portion of the Greenbelt trail. The town has a drainage easement which forms the border of the property and ends at a paper street, which could provide access. The conservation values would be protected. There is a lot of drainage from this property into Alewife Brook. CELT would like to work with the town to establish public use and trails. There is an existing Jordan farm road, and motorized vehicles for access and maintenance would likely be allowed on that road.

There have been discussions regarding a possible declaration of trust or conservation easement with the town. Because the property has prime agricultural soils, future agricultural use would probably be included.

Concern was expressed with the inability of the town to make final decisions on the use of the property, even though the town has contributed to the purchase price. A possibility would be affirmative rights for the town.

Issues to be considered include management of the trails including siting, preservation of at least current amount of access, construction techniques, maintenance.

A special meeting will be held on May 31 regarding the Glew property, including a potential executive session. This is contingent on the item being on the Council agenda.

7. Crosstown Trail signs installation. May 21 at 9:00 a.m. Aluminum roofing nails will be used, leaving it sticking out half an inch. The Planner and CELT will prepare an article for the Courier with a map.

8. Cottage Brook to Ocean House Road trails site visit. Some potential dates were suggested.

9. Trail maintenance. Some additional mowing locations were suggested for the Town Farm property.

Two Lights trail. The wood pile has been moved by the landowner, some brush will be removed and some chips laid.

Outer Loop trail. In one area some lengths of lumber were left, we will check with the Eagle Scout on how they can be used.

Greenbelt trail in the area of the Gull Crest cross country ski trails. This trail should be maintained.

Access to Dyer Woods at the end of Cliff Avenue. The neighbor has been parking cars across the access.

Meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

Next meetings: May 31 and June 14, 2016